of pollutions. It will address, not only domestically but also internationally, how the pollution can be reduced in terms of the present scenario throughout the world.

Major Rivers choked with industrial effluents

*284. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of major rivers and their tributaries are choking with industrial effluents and other pollutants;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and the programmes initiated by Government to clean the rivers indicating the amount spent thereon during the last three years;

(c) whether it is a fact that heavy discharge of sewage water in the Yamuna River is creating havoc with the aquatic life in the river and defeating the River Conservation Plan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the corrective steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (d) 71 river stretches are polluted *inter-alia* due to discharge of domestic and industrial effluents. Steps taken by the Government with regard to pollution from industrial and other sources include notifying industry specific effluent standards, promoting setting up of common effluent treatment plants and environmental surveillance by the Central Pollution Control Board, State Pollution Control Boards and Pollution Control Committees, besides improving the quality of water in major rivers through the National River Conservation Plan (NRCP). Under the NRCP, pollution abatement works are undertaken including diversion and interception of sewage, installation of sewerage treatment plants, etc. A seweage treatment capacity of 865 mld under this programme launched in 1985 under Ganga Action Plan (Phase-I) has been created and subsequent to that, another 1421 mld capacity will the end of the

last financial year. The amount spent works out to Rs. 779.55 crores during the last three financial years under this programme. With its launching over the river Ganga, the quality of water in the river has shown improvement. Similarly, in the river Yamuna, the water quality has shown improvement except for a few stretches.

2. Monitoring of water quality in the Yamuna has shown that in the lean season (March-June) during the year 2004, the Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) in the stretch of the river between Wazirabad and Okhla barrage in Delhi has been as high as 28 mg/1 and Dissolved Oxygen (DO) has been zero. This is not supportive of aquatic life. This is partly due to lack of fresh water in the river downstream of Wazirabad barrage. River conservation programme in the form of Yamuna Action Plan-I as part of the NRCP was also initially taken up on the river Yamuna which is now followed by Yamuna Action Plan, Phase-II (YAP-II). Under YAP-II, works of commissioning/rehabilitation of Sewage Treatment Plants of 135 mld/324 mld capacity and rehabilitation of trunk sewers of 30.82 kms., are proposed to be undertaken. To tackle the pollution in the river in an integrated manner, the Ministry of Urban Development have also prepared an Integrated Action Plan to be implemented by different agencies of the Central Government and the State Government of the NCT of Delhi, which includes components under YAP-II.

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Sir, India's holy rivers, Ganga and Yamuna, traverse through 233 cities and towns covering about nine States, including your State. The question is this. Even after massive investments and spending crores of rupees for cleaning up these rivers, nothing has happened. It was the vision of the late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to clean up the rivers and he had taken up the projects very seriously. But, unfortunately, nothing has happened. It went up to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court rapped the Central Government and the State Governments also for not cleaning up the rivers. With this background, may I ask the hon. Minister as to what has happened to the Ganga Action Plan as well as the Yamuna Action Plan? When are you going to complete the cleaning work of these holy rivers?

SHRI A. RAJA: Sir, the Ganga Action Plan, Phase-I, was already completed. The Yamuna Action Plan, Phase-I, has also been completed. After 1996, all the existing river cleaning projects are merged into one,

namely, the National River Conservation Programme. Under this Programme, right from the inception, Rs. 4,600 crores were given for the approved projects. The works are being taken up throughout the country. So far as Yamuna Action Plan and Ganga Action Plan are concerned, I must admit before the House that there is need for more funds. There are some failures in terms of quality of water after the treatment, after spending crores of rupees. The problem is that the River Conservation Programme itself is not total and absolute in terms of cleaning up the rivers. It is a perpetual exercise which is going to be done then and there without any fail because of urbanization and industrialisation. We can't declare, once and for all, that the river Ganga is cleaned up. The river Ganga or the river Yamuna or whatever the rivers available in this country, is going to be continously cleaned up by providing treatment plants, new crematoria and new effluent treatment plants for industrial purposes. These are the works that have been taken up. However, I must admit before the House that the fund which is available with the Ministry is not at all sufficient to meet the needs. Unless and until more funds are given by the Planning Commission and the Finance Ministry, we can't meet the expenses. However, I can say that the efforts and endeavours that have been made by the Central Government give good results in terms of BOD, that is, Biochemical Oxygen Demand. The level of quality is improving after treatment. It has been proved scientifically.

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Sir, I accept that the Minister is quite efficient and very young. But I am not satisified with the reply of the hon. Minister. He has referred to the Supreme Court orders and said that there are hurdles and that the guidelines are not in favour of cleaning it up without their permission. Sir, if you go through the judgement of the Supreme Court, it says that they need not wait. The Government need not wait for the guidelines. They can proceed with the work. That is the observation made by the Supreme Court. I would like to know whether the hon. Minister has gone through the judgement of the Supreme Court thoroughly. My next question is.....

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let him reply.

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Sir, not only in north India but also in south India, what is happening to the Bhadra and the Tungabhadra

rivers? They are also getting polluted. Courts have also taken cognisance of it. What has the Government done in this regard?

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: And the Cauvery also.

SHRI A. RAJA: Sir, there are numerous rivers, more than 150 rivers which are involved in the National Conciliation Programme. If the hon. Member is interested to get information about specific rivers, I will send the details to the hon. Member.

डा॰ मुरली मनोहर जोशी: उपसभापति महोदय, यह बहुत ही महत्वपूर्ण सवाल है। गंगा और यमुना, इन दोनों नदियों की सफाई के प्रश्न पर और इनको प्रदूषण से मुक्त करने के प्रश्न पर बहुत दिनों से यह देश और यह सदन विचार कर रहा है। गंगा की सफाई के लिए इतनी tributaries को साफ करना है, उसके बारे में मैं यह जानना चाहूंगा कि जो मुख्य रीति से इंडस्ट्रियल डिसचार्ज इन नदियों में हो रहा है, क्या सरकार ने उसकी तरफ ध्यान दिया है कि वह इंडस्ट्रियल डिसचार्ज रोका जाए और उसकी वजह से जो प्रदूषण पैदा हो रहा है, उसको समाप्त किया जाए ? मैं इलाहाबाद में रहता हूं, वहां गंगा का पानी लाल...(व्यवधान)...

श्री सभापति: सबको मालूम है।

डा॰ मुरली मनोहर जोशी: जी, लेकिन गंगा का पानी लाल हो गया है, यह भी ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री सभापति: आप इलाहाबाद में रहते हैं।...(व्यवधान)...

डा॰ मुरली मनोहर जोशी: इसी तरह से वाराणसी में नदी में स्नान के लिए पानी सर्वथा अनुपयोगी हो गया है। कानपुर में भी यही दशा है। आप कह रहे हैं कि बायो कैमिकल आक्सीजन डिमांड की आवश्यकता में सुधार हुआ है। मैं यह पूछना चाहता हूं कि वह केवल सीवरेज के डिसचार्ज को रोकने की वजह से ही जितना होना चाहिए था, वह हुआ है पर बाकी का आप क्या कर रहे हैं? जो केमिकल डिसचार्जिज हैं, जो आरगेनिक डिसचार्जिज हैं ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री सभापति: जोशी जी, टाइम नहीं है। इसका जवाब नहीं आ पाएगा।

डा॰ मुरली मनोहर जोशी: यह जवाब आ जाएगा। मैं हिन्दी में बोल रहा हूं इसलिए जवाब आ जाएगा।

श्री सभापति: टाइम नहीं है। हिन्दी और अंग्रेजी की वजह से घड़ी नहीं चलेगी।

डॉ मुरली मनोहर जोशी: मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि इस पर क्या हो रहा है और क्या इंडस्ट्रियल डिसचार्जिज को रोकने के लिए सरकार कुछ कड़ाई से काम कर रही है? चूंकि इन नदियों का व्यास बहुत है तो क्या केन्द्र सरकार उन तमाम राज्य सरकारों को बुलाएगी जिनमें से ये नदियां बहती हैं और एक बहुत ही सुगठित प्रोग्राम निरंतर सफाई का इन रिवर बेसिन्स में तैयार करेगी क्योंकि बिना इसके ये साफ नहीं होंगी।

SHRI A. RAJA: Sir, so far as the Yamuna and the Ganga rivers are concerned, the programme is going on in a phased manner. Under the Ganga Action Plan Phase-2, the number of towns being covered is 59; the number of States being covered is 5; the approved cost is Rs. 1652.89 crores; funds released so far by the Government of India is Rs. 210.15 crores; expenditure incurred by States is Rs. 192.59 crores; the number of schemes sanctioned is 262 and the number of schemes completed is 61; the pollution load tackled is 780 m.l.t. This is about the Ganga. Similarly, about the Yamuna also I can give the details. Here I would like to share the real problem with the House. we are giving some treatment plants to the States in which the State Government is also having its own share. Once we set up a treatment plant, the operation and maintenance cost has to be borne by the State Government. As the Minister, I must admit before the House that after three to four years, we come to know that the treatment plants which were set by us have stopped working. When we directed the State Pollution Control Board and the State Government to look into the matter, they said that they were not having adequate funds to look after the operation and maintenane of the treatment plants. If the treatment plant which was commissioned earlier starts giving contaminated water, naturally, the STP will automatically be thrown up in the air.

This is the problem we are facing with the State Governments...

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI: This is why I asked whether you would convene a meeting of all the State Governments and, then, create a body so that this problem does not arise.

SHRI A. RAJA: I have been periodically writing letters to the Chief Ministers and the State Pollution Control Boards saying that these are the problems being faced by the Central Government. Of course, as the senior Member has suggested, I will call a meeting of the concerned Ministers very soon.

DR. KARAN SINGH: Sir, the rivers in this country have always been looked upon as sacred; we have hymns of the rivers way back to the Vedas. One of the greatest tragedies has been the way in which we have polluted almost all our rivers in the last 50 years. I am sorry to see that the *Swatch Ganga Abhiyan*, that was lauched by Shri Rajiv Gandhi several decades ago, has been a total failure. Whatever the Minister may say, — I have heard the environmental NGOs; I have heard public hearings in Varanasi, Allahabad and Kanpur — the water is absolutely getting polluted; there is no improvement in Ganga water in Varanasi, Mr. Minister. And, he has rightly said that whatever monies that have been spent by the Government of India has been wasted because those plans are non-operative. This is a national scandal and a disgrace. Would the hon. Minister kindly assure the House than an effective body will be set up which will ensure that the hundreds of crores of rupees that we are spending on these rivers are properly spent? Our whole civilisation revolves around the Ganga-Yamuna Basin. Luckily, the River Saraswati is invisible; otherwise, we would have polluted Saraswati as well. Will the Minister not look upon this sectorally but ask the Cabinet to set up some effective body to monitor it because vast sums of money have been misused and have been wasted.

SHRI A. RAJA: I will take up the matter for consideration.

श्री सभापति: इसमें कई सप्लीमेंटरी क्वेश्चन्स आए हैं। ...(व्यवधान)... एक मिनट.. एक मिनट...(व्यवधान)... एक मिनट सुन लीजिए। ...(व्यवधान)... आपने कह लिया, मैं इनको कह रहा हूं। ...(व्यवधान)...

डॉ मुरली मनोहर जोशी: इस पर आधे घंटे की चर्चा...(व्यवधान)...

श्री सभापति: बहुत प्रश्न आए हैं, बहुत महत्वपूर्ण प्रश्न है। मैं इस पर दोबारा चर्चा कराऊंगा। किस रूप में, कैसे कराई जा सकती है, उसकी व्यवस्था करके माननीय मंत्री महोदय को दे दें। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री कमाल अख्तर: सर, इस पर शार्ट चर्चा करा दीजिए।

श्री सभापति: आप भी उसमें शामिल होंगे। इस पर हम चर्चा कराएंगे।